Social Development Zones

367. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government proposed to established the Social Development Zones in the country;

(b) if so, the essential features of these Zones;

(c) whether 30 Central Universities, eight IITs and seven IIMs, proposed to be established by Government, would be associated with the Social Development Zones; and

(d) the names of the States in which these are proposed to be established?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) The proposal for Social Development Zones is only at an exploratory stage at present and no details have been finalized.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

Target year for removing illiteracy

†368. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH MAJITHA:
DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the year 2015 has been fixed as a target year for removing illiteracy in the country;

(b) if so, when this decision was taken and the percentage of illiteracy in the country at that time;

(c) the percentage likely to be at the end of March, 2007; and

(d) the reaction of Government with regard to success of removal of illiteracy in the country upto the target year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The literacy data in the country is collected through the decennial census operations. According to the the last census conducted in 2001, the literacy rate was 64.84%. The next census is due in 2011.

(d) Does not arise. However, the success of achieving the target for removal of illiteracy would depend upon the resources allocated for the purpose.

Checking the cheating in examinations

369. SHRI EKANATH K. THAKUR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that cheating in examination has become a far more developed

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

activity these days and it becomes much more serious during the entrance tests for admission to medical and engineering colleges;

(b) whether it is also a fact that everything from impersonation to paper leaking to cheating is used to get that coveted seat in a prestigious institute; and

(c) if so, the steps Government proposes to take to check the menance of hi-tech cheating?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI D. PURANDESWARI): (a) and (b) Instances of examination related malpractices do come to light from time to time.

(c) The bodies conducting examinations (e.g. Universities, Board of Secondary Education, etc.) take steps to curb examination - related malpractices.

Recognition of a State university

370. SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that during November, 2007, Delhi High Court has ruled that recognition of the University Grants Commission is not a pre-condition for a State Government to set up a university;

(b) if so, whether such a situation would not result in indiscriminate setting up of universities without simultaneously conforming to the laid-down standards of infrastructure, curriculum, eligibility criteria, faculty's academic profile, etc. thereby compromising the quality of education; and

(c) the steps taken for maintaining the quality of instructions?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMTI D. PURANDESWARI):

(a) Yes, the Hon'ble Delhi High Court *vide* its judgement dated 2nd July, 2007 (WP No. 18188 of 2006) has held that there is no provision either in the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act or in the Regulation, which require a recognition/approval of the UGC before a University is regarded as one under Section 2 (f) of the UGC Act.

(b) As per provision of the UGC Act, 1956, a "University" means a university established or incorporated under a Central Act, a Provincial Act or a State Act. Further, the Central Government may, on the advice of the Commission, declare by notification in the offical Gazette, that any institutions for higher education, other than a university shall be deemed to be a university for the purpose of the UGC Act.

(c) The UGC has issued Regulation on minimum standard of instructions for the grant of First/Master Degree, 2003.

Reforms in Madarsa education

371. SHRI P.R. RAJAN: Will the Minsiter of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is working on any concrate measures to reform the madarsa education; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?